

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A processor comprising:  
2 an apparatus to rotate registers in software pipelined loops; and  
3 a register rotation prediction unit to predict register addresses for future loop  
4 iterations.
- 1 2. The processor of claim 1 further including a buffer to hold buffered  
2 instructions with predicted register addresses.
- 1 3. The processor of claim 2 further including unarchitected predicate registers to  
2 predicate the buffered instructions.
- 1 4. The processor of claim 2 wherein the predicted register addresses are such  
2 that the buffered instructions can be issued simultaneously with a branch instruction.
- 1 5. The processor of claim 1 further including a hint register to encode prediction  
2 hints for the register rotation prediction unit.
- 1 6. The processor of claim 5 wherein the hint register is configured to hold static  
2 hints generated by a compiler.
- 1 7. The processor of claim 5 wherein the hint register is configured to hold  
2 dynamic hints generated at runtime.
- 1 8. The processor of claim 5 wherein the hint register includes a field to specify  
2 an iteration distance.
- 1 9. The processor of claim 1 further comprising a plurality of unarchitected  
2 frame marker registers.

1 10. The processor of claim 9 wherein the register rotation prediction unit  
2 comprises speculation decision making hardware to compute values for the plurality  
3 of unarchitected frame marker registers.

1 11. The processor of claim 10 further comprising register renaming hardware in a  
2 pipeline, the register renaming hardware being responsive to the plurality of  
3 unarchitected frame marker registers.

1 12. The processor of claim 1 further comprising a trace cache.

1 13. The processor of claim 12 wherein the trace is configured to hold a prediction  
2 hint for each trace.

1 14. The processor of claim 13 further comprising a trace cache fill unit to apply  
2 register rotation prediction to traces as traces are constructed.

1 15. A processing system comprising:  
2 an execution pipeline;  
3 cache memory coupled to the execution pipeline to hold processor  
4 instructions arranged in a software loop; and  
5 register rotation prediction hardware to predict physical register values for the  
6 processor instructions in future iterations of the software loop.

1 16. The processing system of claim 15 further comprising:  
2 a software pipeline instruction buffer coupled between the execution pipeline  
3 and the register rotation prediction hardware to hold the processor instructions in  
4 future iterations of the software loop.

1 17. The processing system of claim 16 further comprising:  
2 at least one unarchitected frame marker register coupled to the register  
3 rotation prediction hardware to hold predicted register offsets for future iterations.

1 18. The processing system of claim 17 wherein the execution pipeline includes  
2 register renaming logic responsive to the at least one unarchitected frame marker  
3 register.

1 19. The processing system of claim 16 wherein the register rotation prediction  
2 hardware includes a circuit to specify complete physical register addresses for the  
3 processor instructions in future iterations of the software loop.

1 20. The processing system of claim 19 wherein processor instructions held in the  
2 software pipeline instruction buffer include fully specified physical register  
3 addresses.

1 21. The processing system of claim 16 wherein the execution pipeline is  
2 configured to speculatively execute instructions received from the software pipeline  
3 instruction buffer.

1 22. The processing system of claim 21 further comprising a plurality of  
2 unarchitected predicate registers, wherein the instructions within the software  
3 pipeline instruction buffer are predicated on at least one of the plurality of  
4 unarchitected predicate registers.

1 23. A method of executing a software pipelined loop comprising:  
2 rotating registers for each iteration of the loop; and  
3 predicting register rotations for future iterations of the loop.

1 24. The method of claim 23 wherein the software pipelined loop comprises at  
2 least one branch instruction, the method further comprising issuing at least one non-  
3 branch instruction simultaneously with the at least one branch instruction.

1 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the at least one non-branch instruction is  
2 predicated on an unarchitected predicate register.

1 26. The method of claim 24 further comprising speculatively removing stop bits  
2 from the at least one branch instruction.

1 27. The method of claim 26 further comprising speculatively executing the at  
2 least one non-branch instruction.

1 28. The method of claim 23 wherein predicting comprises:  
2 responsive to a hint register, predicting register rotations for more than one  
3 iteration in the future; and  
4 modifying at least one unarchitected frame marker register.

1 29. The method of claim 28 further comprising:  
2 speculatively executing instructions for the more than one iteration in the  
3 future; and  
4 squashing the speculative execution if a data dependence is violated.

1 30. The method of claim 29 further comprising modifying the hint register when  
2 speculative execution is squashed.